

above Amendments and the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the outstanding objections and rejections and they be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the Office Action, claims 7 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 5,570,990 issued to Bonora, *et al.* ("Bonora") This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In this response, independent claim 7 has been amended to more clearly present the claimed invention. Amended claim 7 recites "A method for moving substrates in and out of a manufacturing process ..., comprising the steps of: ... selectively transmitting a communication start signal to the loader by the automatic transfer device only when the cassette is transferred to the process apparatus through the automatic transfer device" (Emphasis Added). In this regard, the Examiner asserted that this claimed feature is shown in column 8, lines 34-45 of Bonora. This assertion is respectfully disagreed with.

Column 8, lines 34-45 of Bonora is directed to Fig. 10, in which the container track unit 248 (see Fig. 11) in the mobile loader stocker 110 communicates with the processing unit 12 regardless of whether the mobile loader stocker 110 is a manual transport device or an automatic transport device. Bonora fails to teach or suggest that the container track unit 248 selectively communicate only when the mobile loader stocker 110 is an automatic transport device.

In fact, throughout the specification, Bonora describes that the mobile loader stocker 110 is a manual transport device, as shown in Fig. 16, although the mobile loader stocker 110 can be a fully automated loader stocker as shown in Fig. 15. Nevertheless, the communication is made between the mobile loader stocker 110 and the processing unit 12 *regardless of the mobile*

loader stoker 110 is a manual transport device or an automatic transport device. It is respectfully submitted that, in Bonora, the communication between the mobile loader stoker 110 and the processing unit 12 is not selectively performed depending on whether the mobile loader stoker 110 is an automatic transport device or not.

Thus, Bonora fails to teach or suggest the claimed feature of “selectively transmitting a communication start signal to the loader by the automatic transfer device only when the cassette is transferred to the process apparatus through the automatic transfer device”. No secondary reference has been introduced to cure the deficiency from the teachings of Bonora. The Examiner has not provided any explanation as to how the asserted modification is motivated from Bonora despite Bonora’s explicit teaching of non-selective communication between the the mobile loader stoker 110 and the processing unit 12.

As a separate issue, dependent claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) because its base claim 7 and intervening claim 8 have been rejected. Applicants respectfully submit that it is not a appropriate reason for the rejection. It is submitted that a dependent claim can be patentable even if its base claim is not. The Examiner has not provided any prior art related to claim 9. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 7 and its dependent claims 8 and 9 are patentable over Bonora. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Other Matters


Claim 9 has been amended to correct informalities therein.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, claims 7-9 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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APPENDIX

The “marked-up” version of the amended claims is as follows:

7. (Amended) A method for moving substrates in and out of a manufacturing process using a system comprising an automatic transfer device for automatically transferring a cassette that stores substrates, a manual transfer device for transferring the cassette according to an instruction of an operator, and a process apparatus for performing predetermined steps on the substrate stored in the cassette, the process apparatus including a loader having a port on which cassettes transferred by the automatic transfer device and the manual transfer device are placed, and a job table on which the predetermined steps on the substrate stored in the cassette on the port are performed, comprising the steps of:

(a) transferring the cassette to the process apparatus through the automatic transfer device or the manual transfer device when the port is available;

(b) selectively transmitting a communication start signal to the loader by the automatic transfer device only when the cassette is transferred to the process apparatus through the automatic transfer device;

(c) loading the cassette to the port from the automatic transfer device;

(d) loading the cassette to the port according to the instruction of the operator when the cassette is transferred to the process apparatus through the manual transfer device in step (a);

(e) determining whether the cassette is detected on the port;

(f) determining whether the communication start signal is detected when the cassette is detected on the port; and

(g) setting the process apparatus in an automatic transfer mode when the communication start signal is detected, and setting the process apparatus in a manual transfer mode when the communication start signal is not detected.

9. (Twice Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein the method further comprises the steps of:

(h) automatically chucking the cassette when the process apparatus is set in the automatic transfer mode and chucking the cassette according to the instructions of the operator when the process apparatus is set in the manual transfer mode;

(i) reading the cassette ID of the cassette using the cassette ID reader on the loader[,]; and

(j) checking a position and a number of the glass substrates in the cassette on the port in step (g).